Tucker Ellis LLP

Ortho-Toluidine Litigation

Overview

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Ortho-toluidine is a clear colorless or light yellow liquid used during the manufacturing of pigments, rubber-vulcanizing chemicals, herbicides, and pesticides. It is also used in some pharmaceuticals, laboratory stains, and hair dyes, and it can be found in cigarette smoke.

Since 1983, ortho-toluidine has been classified as “reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen.” In 2014, it was reevaluated following several cancer studies published in medical literature, and the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) classified it as a known human carcinogen.

Ortho-toluidine is no longer manufactured in the United States, but over 1 million pounds of it are imported each year. Occupational exposure to ortho-toluidine can occur by inhalation or skin contact during its production. Industrial workers have the highest risk of exposure, particularly those employed in plants where ortho-toluidine is used to manufacture dyes, pesticides, and rubber products. Also at high risk of exposure are hairstylists, who can be exposed to hair dyes containing the chemical, and medical laboratory employees, who use it to stain tissues.

Short-term effects of ortho-toluidine exposure include eye, skin, and respiratory irritation, dizziness, and headaches. Long-term effects allegedly include bladder cancer and anemia.

How Tucker Ellis Can Help

In addition to manufacturers and distributors of products containing ortho-toluidine, employers using it in their production or operations are also possible targets in this litigation. The Tucker Ellis Mass Tort & Product Liability Group can assist clients with legal issues and help develop strategies to manage risks.

The Tucker Ellis Mass Tort & Product Liability Group represents product manufacturers in tens of thousands of cases filed in state and federal courts nationwide at both the trial and appellate levels. Our lawyers focus on the national, regional, and local defense of product liability cases involving industrial, commercial, and consumer products and toxic tort cases related to alleged exposure to naturally occurring substances such as asbestos, silica, coal mine dust, and talc, as well as welding fume, mold, and other claimed toxins.